

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for improving bile acid binding functionality of a food product or food product intermediate comprising short chain beta-glucan, comprising:
 - 5 obtaining a short chain beta glucan from a grain;
 - providing a food product or food product intermediate;
 - adding to the food product or food product intermediate at least one modifying agent to provide a food product or food product intermediate with improved bile acid binding functionality; and
 - 10 preparing the food product or food intermediate.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the modifying agent is an enzyme.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the enzyme is a 1→4 beta glucanase.
- 15 4. The method of claim 3 wherein the 1→4 beta glucanase comprises laminex BG.
5. The method of claim 3 wherein the 1→4 β -glucanase comprises multifect B.
- 20 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the short chain beta glucan has a molecular weight which is less than about 5,000 Da.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the short chain beta glucan has a molecular weight which is in the range of about 500-2500 Da.
- 25 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the short chain beta glucan has a molecular weight which is in the range of about 900-1800 Da.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising contacting the food product or food product intermediate with an additional modifying agent so as to provide modified short chain beta-glucan.

10. A food product or food product intermediate having improved bile acid binding capacity comprising;

5 a grain selected from the group consisting of oat, barley, wheat or corn; a modifying agent; and

10 a short chain or modified short chain beta glucan having an average molecular weight of less than 5,000 Da.

11. A cereal product with improved bile acid binding functionality, comprising; short chain beta glucan or modified short chain beta glucan; and

15 wherein the short chain beta glucan or modified short chain beta glucan resulted from *in situ* modification of native beta glucan in the cereal.

12. The cereal product of claim 11, wherein the short chain beta glucan is less than about 5,000 Da.

13. The cereal product of claim 11, wherein the short chain beta glucan is in the

20 range of about 900-1800 Da.

14. The cereal product of claim 11, wherein the *in situ* modification comprises enzymatic treatment.

25 15. The cereal product of claim 11, wherein the enzymatic treatment comprises treatment with a 1→4 beta glucanase.

16. The cereal product as recited in claim 11 wherein the cereal product is selected from the group consisting of ready-to-eat cereals, cereal bars, cookies, granola bars, snack bars, chews, breads, ready to eat meals and muffins.

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17. A food product or food intermediate as recited in claim 10, wherein the food product is selected from the group consisting of ready-to-eat cereals, cereal bars, cookies, granola bars, snack bars, chews, breads, ready to eat meals and muffins and dairy products.

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18. A method for improving the bile acid binding functionality of a food product or food product intermediate having native beta glucan as a component, comprising:

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contacting the food product or food intermediate with at least one 1→4

beta glucanase; and

increasing the temperature of the food product or food intermediate to 110°C for at least about 45 minutes to provide the food product or food intermediate comprising short chain beta glucan or modified short chain beta glucan.

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19. A method for improving bile acid binding functionality of a food product or food product intermediate as recited in claim 1, wherein the short chain beta glucan retains at least 10% of starch and protein associated with such grain.

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20 A food product or food product intermediate as recited in claim 10, wherein the short chain beta glucan retains at least 10% of starch and protein associated with such grain.